

be of inestimable value in adding to the data already published and, contrary to widely-held opinion, it would appear from this present study that *Tarsipes spenserae* is not only easy to maintain in captivity, but worthy of far greater attention than it has hitherto received.

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FROM FIELD AND STUDY

A Note on the Feeding Habits of a large Deep Water Volutid Gastropod *Cottonia nodiplicata*—a specimen of *Cottonia nodiplicata* (Cox, 1910) trawled in November 1970 by H.M.A.S. *Diamantina*, Cruise DM 1/70, from 60 fathoms off Mandurah, W.A. (32° 33' S, 115° 04' E) has provided the first information on the food of this species.

In the laboratory aboard the vessel the collector (B. R. Wilson) observed the animal (with a shell length of 44 cm) defaecate a mass of calcareous material. This was preserved and examined later. The bulk of the material consisted of the remains of three species of starfishes. Most plentiful were skeletal plates of *Stellaster inspinosus*; there were also plates and spines of *Astropecten* sp. and a few plates and spherical tubercles of an undescribed species of *Asterodiscus*. The latter starfish has also been dredged from the same area.

About one sixth of the total material consisted of sand, containing Foraminifera, silicious sponge spicules, fragments of echinoid test and spine, Bryozoa and Mollusca. There were also several small whole gastro-

Pods and bivalves. Much of this material may have come from the alimentary canal of the starfishes, which appear to be the main source of food for *C. nodiplicata*.

—L. M. MARSH, W.A. Museum, Perth.

Predation of Blowfish by Flathead and Flounder—In January, 1972 a Flounder (*Pseudorhombus* sp.) caught by my brother, Brian Hutchison, in the Swan River had a small Blowfish (*Spheroides pleurogramma*) in the gut. A fortnight later a Dusky Flathead (*Platycephalus fuscus**) caught by myself regurgitated a Blowfish about 8 cm long. It was not possible to determine whether either Blowfish had been taken live, but the predilection of both species for moving bait suggests that they tend to take live prey in preference to dead. Our records, kept during the summers 1969/70, 1970/71 and 1971/72 show that we have taken some 200 Flathead and about 10 Flounder from the lower reaches of the Swan. These two instances are our only observations of predation of Blowfish by these species so such predation must be uncommon, despite the large population of the pest species.

Several other observations may be of interest. The Blowfish population appeared to be lower in 1971/72 than in previous recent summers. The Dusky Flathead appears to begin its spawning run about Christmas time and this extends into February. We rarely record catches of Flathead before Christmas. The earlier catches have a higher female/male ratio than later catches and the females are always markedly larger on the average throughout the season.

* Identified by R. McKay, W.A. Museum.

—D. E. HUTCHISON, W.A. Museum, Perth.

Re-identification of Mouse from Dryandra—In 1954 an article was published in this journal (*W. Aust. Nat.*, 4: 128-141) in which a number of authors presented assessments of the abundance of native mammals in various parts of Western Australia. Dr. D. L. Serventy contributed a section on the mammals of Dryandra forest, in which he mentions a mouse which had been collected at the forestry station on 23 March 1954 by Prof. G. A. Bartholomew of the University of California, Los Angeles. The animal was thought at the time to be a species of *Pseudomys*, and it was referred to this native genus in Serventy's paper.

The potential interest of this record was considerable because the only examples of *Pseudomys* sp. ever recognised from within a sixty mile radius of Dryandra were obtained by the British Museum collector Shortridge at the beginning of this century; he trapped *P. albocinereus* in the sand plains around Beverley, Brookton, and Pingelly, and *P. shortridgei* at a locality he designated as "Woyaline Wells (source of the Avon River) near Pingelly." This last spot is not now known with certainty, but is possibly along Woyerling Creek, which bears a similar name, and which flows from east of Tuttanning Reserve into the Avon system.

The Dryandra specimen is now in Los Angeles, where it was deposited in the U.C.L.A.—Diekey Collections (Catalogue No. 51,229) by Prof. Bartholomew on his return to the United States. I recently obtained it on loan for study, but unfortunately it proved not to be a native rodent but a House Mouse (*Mus musculus*).

I wish to express thanks to Dr. Shelley Barker for drawing my attention to the existence of the specimen; to Dr. D. L. Serventy for providing details of its capture; and to James G. Miller, Curator of the U.C.L.A.—Diekey Collections, for so promptly making it available to me for study.

—A. BAYNES, Department of Zoology, University of Western Australia.

Young Mountain Duck Leaving an Elevated Nest—In 1970 we were privileged to see a Mountain Duck and her mate as they got their young